

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method, in a data processing system, for reducing the size of an object, the method comprising:
 - dividing an object into a plurality of blocks;
 - identifying similar blocks within the plurality of blocks; ~~and~~
 - differentially compressing the similar blocks ~~to form a reduced object;~~
 - identifying identical blocks within the plurality of blocks;
 - suppressing the identical blocks without differentially compressing the identical blocks;
 - performing data compression on at least one block within the plurality of blocks, wherein the at least one block is not differentially compressed, wherein the at least one block is not suppressed, and wherein the step of performing data compression on the at least one block forms a reduced object; and
 - storing the reduced object in a computer readable media.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the plurality of blocks are fixed in size.
3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the plurality of blocks are variable in size and determined based on characteristics of content of the object.
4. – 6. (Canceled)
7. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
 - compressing the object to form a compressed object;
 - comparing an effectiveness of the compressed object with an effectiveness of the reduced object;and
 - using the compressed object if the effectiveness of the compressed object is greater than the effectiveness of the reduced object.
8. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein effectiveness is measured by one of speed of execution and object size.

9. (Original) The method of claim 7, further comprising:
using the reduced object if the effectiveness of the compressed object is less than the effectiveness of the reduced object.
10. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein identifying similar blocks includes identifying one or more features of the plurality of blocks.
11. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein identifying one or more features includes calculating one or more fingerprints for the plurality of blocks.
12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11, wherein identifying similar blocks further includes:
merging the one or more fingerprints for the plurality of blocks to form one or more fingerprint groups;
calculating super fingerprints for the one or more ~~fingerprints~~ fingerprint groups; and
comparing ~~the~~ super fingerprints to each other ~~of the plurality of blocks~~ to determine common features among the super fingerprints.
13. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein identifying similar blocks further includes:
determining whether blocks have a specified number of matching features.
14. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein identifying similar blocks further includes:
identifying a reference block that matches a greatest number of features of remaining similar blocks.
15. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein identifying similar blocks includes:
using heuristics to identify similar blocks.
16. (Canceled)
17. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the reduced object is transmitted over a network.
18. (Currently Amended) A data processing ~~An~~ apparatus for reducing the size of an object, the apparatus comprising:

software instructions and hardware for executing the software instructions, wherein the software instructions further comprise:

division means for dividing an object into a plurality of blocks;

identification means for identifying similar blocks within the plurality of blocks; and

compression means for differentially compressing the similar blocks to ~~form a reduced object;~~

means for identifying identical blocks within the plurality of blocks;

means for suppressing the identical blocks without differentially compressing the identical blocks;

means for performing data compression on at least one block within the plurality of blocks, wherein the at least one block is not differentially compressed, wherein the at least one block is not suppressed, and wherein the means for performing data compression on the at least one block forms to form a reduced object.

19. (Original) The apparatus of claim 18, wherein the plurality of blocks are fixed in size.

20. (Original) The apparatus of claim 18, wherein the plurality of blocks are variable in size and determined based on characteristics of content of the object.

21. – 23. (Canceled)

24. (Original) The apparatus of claim 21, further comprising:

means for compressing the object to form a compressed object;

means for comparing an effectiveness of the compressed object with an effectiveness of the reduced object; and

means for using the compressed object if the effectiveness of the compressed object is greater than the effectiveness of the reduced object.

25. (Original) The apparatus of claim 24, wherein effectiveness is measured by one of speed of execution and object size.

26. (Original) The apparatus of claim 24, further comprising:

means for using the reduced object if the effectiveness of the compressed object is less than the effectiveness of the reduced object.

27. (Original) The apparatus of claim 18, wherein the identification means includes means for identifying one or more features of the plurality of blocks.
28. (Original) The apparatus of claim 27, wherein the means for identifying one or more features includes means for calculating one or more fingerprints for the plurality of blocks.
29. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 28, wherein the identification means further includes:
means for merging the one or more fingerprints for the plurality of blocks to form one or more fingerprint groups;
means for calculating super fingerprints for the one or more ~~fingerprints~~ fingerprint groups; and
means for comparing the super fingerprints to each other ~~of the plurality of blocks~~ to determine common features among the super fingerprints.
30. (Original) The apparatus of claim 27, wherein the identification means further includes:
means for determining whether blocks have a specified number of matching features.
31. (Original) The apparatus of claim 27, wherein identification means further includes:
means for identifying a reference block that matches a greatest number of features of remaining similar blocks.
32. (Original) The apparatus of claim 18, wherein the reduced object is stored in a storage unit.
33. (Original) The apparatus of claim 18, wherein the reduced object is transmitted over a network.
34. (Currently Amended) A computer program product, in a computer readable medium, for reducing the size of an object, the computer program product comprising:
instructions for dividing an object into a plurality of blocks;
instructions for identifying similar blocks within the plurality of blocks; ~~and~~
instructions for differentially compressing the similar blocks ~~to form a reduced object;~~
instructions for identifying identical blocks within the plurality of blocks;
instructions for suppressing the identical blocks without differentially compressing the identical blocks;

instructions for performing data compression on at least one block within the plurality of blocks,
wherein the at least one block is not differentially compressed, wherein the at least one block is not
suppressed, and wherein the step of performing data compression on the at least one block forms a
reduced object; and
storing the reduced object in a computer readable media.

35. – 36. (Canceled)